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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2012

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State Board of Education to Revise State's Achievement Index

Bellingham, WA – The Washington State Board of Education's (SBE) July 10-11 meeting at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, will mark the start of the Board and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) collaborative effort to revise the state's Achievement Index.

In 2009, SBE partnered with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create the Washington Achievement Index. Through the Measurement of Student Progress and the High School Proficiency Exams, as well as graduation data, the Index provides schools with a 'snapshot' of their achievement in language arts, math, science, and extended graduation rates. The Index takes into account improvement from the previous year and a school's relative performance compared to demographically similar schools.

Since 2010, SBE and the OSPI have used the Achievement Index to recognize the state's highest-achieving schools.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is requesting permission from the U.S. Department of Education to use the Achievement Index for statewide accountability. The use of the Achievement Index in accountability is a key component of Washington State's application for a flexibility waiver from the federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or No Child Left Behind.

The federal requirements for a waiver from ESEA call for significant changes to the Achievement Index. One possible change to the Index would be the addition of student growth data, which would highlight individual student improvement over time. This growth could be compared to peers to see if the student is making adequate year to year progress. This is very different from the current Index, which only analyzes data by school, and not on an individual or classroom level.

The July Board meeting will include a discussion of these potential changes and a preview of the work ahead. The anticipated deadline for a revised Index is June 2013.

The July Board meeting will also include a discussion of draft rules for districts seeking a waiver from the 180-day school year requirement. The State Board of Education is required by law to adopt rules for evaluation of requests for waivers of the basic education requirement of a minimum 180-day school year.

Materials related to the July Board meeting and the meeting agenda are available at www.sbe.wa.gov.

The Board meeting will begin Wednesday, July 11, at 8:30 a.m.

The public and news media are invited to attend.

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About the State Board of Education: The State Board of Education provides advocacy and strategic oversight of public education. The Board is comprised of 16 members: five are elected by school board directors, seven are appointed by the Governor, two serve as student representatives, and one serves as a private school representative. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is also a member. The Board's recent work includes the approval of a new career and college-ready graduation requirements framework and developing the first Washington state intervention policy into our persistently lowest-achieving schools.